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The use of paraprofessionals in new career positions in public schools has spread rapidly. Measurements of reading readiness and achievement indicate that teacher aides trained in tutoring improve pupil performance. The utilization of students for cross-age teaching, parents to read to children, and community members as "street academics" is suggested for further improvement of pupil performance as well as the integration of school with community. The employment of community people in the schools increases the school's responsiveness to community mores, meets present staff shortages, decreases pupil-teacher ratios, increases opportunities for more individualized instruction, and contributes to the development of differential staffing patterns. The employment of paraprofessionals should be accompanied by adoption of a career advancement system by which paraprofessionals can advance to teacher positions and by which teachers' motivation can be encouraged and recognized. Dangers inherent in the new careers trend are the assimilation of paraprofessionals in the educational structure without restructuring education, the transfer of nonprofessional teaching tasks without increasing professional effectiveness, and the selection of paraprofessionals who do not represent the community. (DL)

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"THE INSTRUCTIONAL AIDE: NEW DEVELOPMENTS"

Frank Riessman and Alan Gartner

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"The Instructional Aide: New Developments"*

Frank Riessman and Alan Gartner**

Don Davies, Associate Commissioner for Educational Personnel Development, U.S. Office of Education, speaking at the jointly sponsored TEPS-NEA - New Careers Development Center, National Conference on the Paraprofessional, Career Advancement and Pupil Learning, commented that he has never seen an idea in education which has spread so rapidly, nor had so pervasive an effect as new careers in the public schools. This past year has seen a significant acceleration of that development:

--The implementation of the first major piece of legislation in the field of education (indeed in any of the human services) which provides a comprehensive approach to personnel development, the Education Personnel Development Act.

--The utilization of paraprofessionals[1] across a broad spectrum of activities and in numbers now in excess of 200,000.

--The consequent consideration in many states of the role, responsibilities, and regulations pertinent to the use of such personnel. Several state departments of education and state boards of education have issued policy statements and guidelines; the California legislature enacted "The Instructional Aide Act of 1968."

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* Material in this paper is based, in part, on a speech given by the senior author, "The Schools, Paraprofessionals, and Pupil Learning," at the National Conference on the Paraprofessional, Career Advancement, and Pupil Learning, co-sponsored by the New Careers Development Center, School of Education, New York University, and the National Commission on Teacher Education and Professional Standards of the National Education Association, Washington, D.C., January 9-10, 1969.

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--The major involvement of the organizations of the teachers, the NEA and the AFT, in these programs. And the finding of the NEA Research Division that teachers identify as their number one training need how to work with aides effectively.

--The proliferation of materials, guides, and audio-visual aides to assist in the implementation of programs.[2]

The bulk of the literature on the use of paraprofessionals in schools has focused upon their activities in the classroom, their selection, training and compensation, and the question of the affect of their use upon teacher activities and upon the aide himself.[3] We will focus upon three areas, less covered in the literature, which must be addressed:

1) The relationship of the use of paraprofessionals to pupil performance.
2) The connection between the use of paraprofessionals and such dominant issues of contemporary education as local control, decentralization, and community participation.
3) The critical importance of career advancement programs as an essential component of the use of paraprofessionals.

Pupil Learning

It is to state the obvious that the purpose of the school must centrally be concerned with pupil learning. The difficulty of measuring pupil learning and the more complex task of assessing the contribution of the various activities which go on in (as well as outside of)the school has meant that hard data in this area is none too abundant.

A prior and indeed more fundamental question is the lack of clarity as to the goals of the school.[4] That children learn, or at least some do, is clear; how, why, in what ways, under which set of circumstances, in what combinations and structures is less clear. Nonetheless, the use of paraprofessionals in the schools, as well as every other activity which goes on there, must ultimately be measured against standards of educational productivity.

Part of the problem of the measure of pupil learning is the inadequacy of our tools -- both in terms of their applicability to various populations, as well as their limited scope. And our sense of the gains in educational productivity that are needed, and to which we believe the use of paraprofessionals can contribute, are such that most standard measures of such factors as reading performance are inadequate. Also, the very measures of reading performance are themselves flawed by their limited scope and the possibility of teaching (and thus measuring) test-taking skills and not reading. Nevertheless, the data which we will present is limited by the availability of research which is almost entirely devoted to such measures as reading scores.

Recent studies in Indiana, Minnesota, Michigan, Colorado, and New York indicate the effect upon pupil learning of the use of paraprofessionals in the classroom. In Minneapolis, pupil learning, as measured by pre-test and post-test pairs using the Metropolitan Reading Readiness Test given at five month intervals to 234 children, indicates that pupils in kindergarten classes with an aide made significantly greater gains in reading readiness, number readiness, and total readiness than did matched children in classes where there was no aide. The classes with an aide had an average total readiness gain of 15 points, from a pre-test

score of 49 to a post-test of 64, compared with an average total readiness gain of 10 points for those classes with no aides.[4a] In Greenburgh, N.Y., performance of second grade classes with an aide were compared with similar classes the previous school year which had no aides. The measuring instrument was the Metropolitan Achievement Test and the number of classes scoring above grade level increased from 2 to 5, and those scoring below grade level decreased from 5 to 4. The project's director concludes that it was the introduction of the teacher aide which is responsible for this achievement test outcome.[5] A Detroit study, where 4,905 aides are employed throughout Wayne County, found that school administrators and teachers believe that paraprofessionals are effective in improving the education of students.[6] And in Greeley, Colorado, in a Title III, ESEA program, where demonstrable pupil performance gains were achieved, the teachers attribute these gains primarily to the introduction of paraprofessionals.[7]

Research conducted at the Department of Psychology, Indiana University, on a tutoring program where paraprofessionals, trained with a total of 21 hours of programmed instruction, are then successfully tutoring first grade children, fifteen minutes a day, five days a week, in some 50 projects in 12 states, has shown remarkable results in reading performance on the part of the children.[8] Indeed the entire field of tutoring is one in which paraprofessionals have accomplished great results. The New York Board of Education, in reporting on a program conducted by the model anti-poverty program, Mobilization for Youth, states that over a five month period where older children (themselves poor students) tutored younger children with reading difficulties, those tutored gained 6.0 months compared to a control group's gain of

3.5 months, while the tutors gained an extraordinary 2.4 years compared to a control group gain of 7.0 months. A leap of this magnitude is the order of achievement that we must strive for in the introduction and use of paraprofessionals. On a broader basis, the National Commission on Resources for Youth is operating "Youth Tutors Youth Centers" in Newark, Philadelphia, and Washington, D.C., with results similar to those obtained at Mobilization for Youth. Additionally impressive in the National Commission's design is the introduction of this model into the Neighborhood Youth Corps with older members operating the centers, younger ones tutoring, and with a plan for Washington, D.C. to have the graduates become tutor trainers.

Here we can identify one of the powerful instruments for sharp educational gains: allowing students to become teachers as quickly as possible.[9] The cross-aged learning designs of Ronald Lippitt provide some of the most soundly conceived and most thoroughly tested concepts of current study. The opportunities are myriad: cross-aged teaching, student teacher-learner teams, dividing of classes or sections so that each one is presented different material by a professional teacher and then the students are paired allowing one to teach the other. The new Educational Professions Development Act encourages such efforts, as do the guidelines written by state department's of education in several states.

A program sponsored by Mobilization for Youth, STAR (Supplementary Teaching Assistance in Reading), using paraprofessionals to train parents to read to children offers yet another way to maximize learning. Studies done on the youngsters, first grade pupils from predominantly Puerto Rican families, whose teachers identified them as likely reading

failures, found that the children whose parents were trained one hour per week scored higher in nine different reading tests than did matched children who received two hours of remediation per week from professionals, or a control group.

The "Street Academies," sponsored by the Urban League and supported initially by the Ford Foundation, are yet another instance of using paraprofessionals as part of a new and more intensive involvement in The life of the community and the student. Street workers, themselves of the community, act, in the words of an Urban League official, as the "motivator, counselor, friend, father, disciplinarian, and companion. He becomes the great encourager."[10]

Reading scores are a limited measure of pupil performance, nor have the gains been of the magnitude we seek. We would want to see careful study of the impact of paraprofessionals upon a broader spectrum of pupil activities, including the critical component of youngsters learning how to learn. Here the utilization of children in teaching roles, as well as learners, can have marked effect.

While the evidence is slim and indirect as to the impact upon pupil performance of various teacher activities which often result from the introduction of paraprofessionals, there is a growing body of data which indicates that paraprofessionals do indeed allow teachers time to give more individualized attention to children, to spend more time in preparation both in school and at home (apparently the audience, which now includes another adult, encourages greater preparatory efforts upon teachers' part), and improves the climate for learning.[11] Much more needs to be done in the way of research and evaluation; an Oregon

project funded by the Office of Education's Division of Vocational Education Bureau of Research examining both the costs and benefits of the use of paraprofessionals, and the relationship between the two, points the way to a necessary area of study. The illustrations presented here, representative of many others,[12] do indicate, however, that aides make a significant impact upon pupil learning and that their continued use and further training can have an even more powerful effect.

Community Participation

The call for greater control of our schools -- and other human service agencies (health programs, welfare, police, etc.) -- is mounting throughout the country.[13] Ghetto parents, only recently maligned as apathetic and unconcerned, are now demanding that schools which have not taught their children must now come under their control, in order to make that happen. The "Bundy Plan" for the New York City's schools, the three decentralized districts in the city, community controlled schools in Boston and Washington, D.C., all share the intensive use of paraprofessionals as way to bring schools closer to the community, to make schools goals and habits better attuned to the community, to bring into the classroom the special knowledge and feeling[14] of the people of the community, and to build the human resources of the community.

Questions of community control are beyond the direct scope of this article, whose authors favor strong community participation; however, there are few if any who would not seek a greater community involvement and participation. One of the most powerful ways for this involvement is for the people of the community to be a part of the school, to be a part of its staff. The gains in school-community relations, in intro-

ducing into the school the mores and culture of the community, in improving the quality of what takes place in the school are all too obvious to need belabored argument. From the perspective of the school, the employment of community people can provide a new and powerful link with the community, can meet present staff shortages, and if the anticipated increase in available teacher manpower does occur provide the means for a marked decrease in pupil-teacher ratios and thus increase the opportunities for more individualized instruction. Further, the employment of paraprofessionals contributes to the development of a differential staffing pattern for the schools, one of the important new developments in education.[15] Of course, without adequate resources or sound program neither new staffing patterns nor new control systems will by themselves produce new quality education.

From the point of view of the community, the introduction of paraprofessionals brings its people into the school in a participating and essential manner. Where the training and education essential to a career advancement program takes place, the paraprofessionals from the community gain skills and ability thus building the human resources of the community, an essential need of the ghettos and barrios of America. The director of a small community operated (and supported) school in Roxbury, Massachusetts, describes the relationship of the community person and the credentialled professional as follows.

> At the Highland Park Free School the community teachers realize that the school is their thing -- They are the people who have their children in this, their school, so therefore it is also their classroom. They organize the classes, they organize the parents of the youngsters in their classes, and the so-called certified teacher is the technician who is coming in to provide the kind of skills that are necessary in order to have a good functioning classroom. ...It is a dual sensitizing process: there are many persons who feel that black youngsters can't learn, or that there is a level beyond which they cannot go. How do you get the lid off? There are some black people who feel that they are incapable

> of learning -- adults and children -- and how do you get them to stop feeling that whites are superior?[16]

Unless the introduction of paraprofessionals into the schools is made a part of a new order of business, a new set of priorities, indeed of a new pedagogy, then they will be little more than band-aids on a cancer, a patchwork upon a system too often failing the poor, the black and brown, and indeed the white and middle-class as well.

* * *

Career Advancement

While thousands of schools have adopted the use of paraprofessionals to work both within and outside of the classroom, far fewer have made their employment a part of a career advancement system. By this we mean a system where a school system develops an occupational track (or tracks) beginning with entry-level workers lacking formal education and training, and provides opportunity for step-by-step advancement. This demands both fixed line items in the school budget for each step, as well as training and education built into the employment situation. Although Title I, ESEA, perhaps the largest single source of support for the employment of paraprofessionals,[17] does not require such a career advancement system,[18] more recent legislation does do so -- for example, the Education Professions Development Act (See especially Sections 518 and 531.). along with its administrative guidelines provides for such a program. And when Associate Commissioner Davies announced the Office of Education's new "Career Opportunities Program,"[19] he emphasized that the guidelines would require school districts to incorporate a career ladder. Similarly, many of the recent guidelines issues by various

departments of education encourage and support career advancement systems.[20]

The introduction of a career advancement system produces many potential benefits. It provides a "training set" for school personnel, a view that individual development and learning does not stop at college graduation but that the school is a place where teachers as well as students are involved in growth and learning. The development of career ladders offers the opportunity for more challenging professional activities, allowing teachers to advance without leaving teaching. The improved opportunities and higher motivation of staff will go far to promote better service for the school's clients, the students.

* * *

What are the dangers in these new trend and how can they be countered? There is the danger that the paraprofessional will be absorbed by the educational establishment to provide more but not reorganized or different education. There is the danger that the system will remain intact, co-opt and simply utilize the aides as one-way communicators to explain to the community what it must understand about the school rather than to explain to the school what it must understand about the community. There is the danger that the schools may cream, may select only special types of people from the community to become teacher auxiliaries, thus fail to bring into the life of the school representative members of the community, their voice and demands.

There is the danger that the paraprofessionals and the teachers working with them will fail to be trained and fail to learn from each other. There is the danger that there would be no new routes developed,

routes for teacher auxiliaries to move up to become assistant teachers, associate teachers, and teachers while working on the job during release time. There is the danger that the tasks of the teacher would be redistributed but there would be no new forms of instruction, no reorganization of the school. There is the danger that the teachers relieved of some of their traditional chores would not be stimulated or trained to provide a higher level of teaching, of classroom management function, but would simply take it easier as a result of their new assistants in the classroom. There is the danger that there would be a new hierarchy of differentiated tasks without careers, without the possibility of people moving up the ladder to perform different sets of tasks.

There is the danger that we would actually produce new careers for poor people but that education would not itself be improved, organized and restructured. But the most important danger of all is that the new careers movement may not be thoroughly and deeply linked to integration with the other significant developing movements of our time directed toward decentralization, community control; the reorganization of the human services directed toward increasing their accountability to the consumer, the new black demands, the new self-criticisms of the professions, the youth movement, the students movement, and the new organizations of the paraprofessionals.

* * *

Conclusions

The use of massive numbers of paraprofessionals in career oriented programs is the key to the fulfillment of the demands emanating from

community groups, demands for a significant revolution in the educational system aimed toward a qualitative leap in the improvement of learning of all children. The new careers movement is basically a part of the consumer control thrust in our society, the demand for the involvement and participation of the consumer of the services, as local board members, as employees of the system, as people with a voice in their own and their children's destiny.

The new careers approach brings the community voice inside the system, with new ideas, new demands and a new reflection of community values. The teacher auxiliary hired from the community can bring into the school system what the community wants in the way of education. These new voices are bringing a breath of fresh air into the system. They are not simply being trained by the system, they are helping basically to change it.

The latest issue of the Parent Teacher Association magazine estimates that by 1977 there may be 1-½ million teacher aides in the United States. Presently there are nearly 200,000. Recent reports from Indiana, Minnesota, Colorado, New York and California, all indicate distinctive improvements in the learning of children produced by the utilization of Teacher Aides, particularly in career oriented programs which allow the aide to learn on the job and move toward becoming a teacher with a combined work-study program. A recent cost-benefit study at the University of Minnesota indicates a return of $1.59 for every $1.00 spent for the training of aides in the new careers program.

The new careers movement provides in large numbers this new manpower

that is so needed to assist teachers so that they can devote more time to teaching, to individualized instruction (the basic demand in education today), to reaching the children and helping them to learn how to learn, and by providing themselves as models reinforcing the self-image of the youngsters.

The new aides are much more involved as change agents in the school system, playing more instructional roles. They are involved in a career pattern moving toward becoming teachers; they are not part-time volunteers, they are a part of a powerful new, consumer control, local decentralization trend in the society. They are more often poor--not middle-class housewives, and they are becoming rehabilitated and learning themselves through helping others,a genuine bootstrap approach.

The new careers approach is not simply a manpower approach. We do not merely want to hire some more manpower to do a little more of the same old things--to patch up the school system. The new manpower, the indigenous paraprofessionals, must be throughly involved in providing a new pattern of instruction directed toward new educational goals.

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FOOTNOTES

1. No single adequate term has been designed to describe those who lacking formal credentials and/or the traditional training perform various functions in the human services such as health, education, and welfare programs. For want of a better term we will generally use paraprofessional, although interchanging it with auxiliary personnel (favored in several eastern states) and the general term aide or teacher aide. It is interesting to note that the persons who occupy these positions have come to call themselves new careerists and new professionals (see the New Careers Newsletter, New Careers Development Center, School of Education, New York University, Fall, 1968), while the Greenburgh, N.Y. schools call them "helping teachers".

2. Among recent publications, especially useful are four products of Bank Street College of Education, An Annotated Bibliography on Auxiliary Personnel in Education (1969), New Careers and Roles in The American Schools (Bowman and Klopf, 1969), a provocative film "Teams for Learning", along with several film clips, and a Discussion Guide for use with the film and clips. Also, several publications of The New Careers Project, University Research Corporation, Washington, D.C.; the comprehensive self-instructional training system for teacher aides developed by Scientific Resources, Inc., Union City, New Jersey, and published by Macmillan. The materials distributed at the National Conference on Paraprofessionals, Career Advancement, and Pupil Learning, co-sponsored by TEPS-NEA and The New Careers Development Center, New York University, includes descriptions of a score of exemplary programs and is available at $10 from The New Careers Development Center.

3. The most comprehensive and up-to-date source is An Annotated Bibliography on Auxiliary Personnel in Education, op. cit.

4. See Arthur Pearl, "The Atrocity of Education", chapter 1, "A Sorry State of Affairs" (mimeograph).

4A. "Teacher Aide Project", Minneapolis Public Schools, Minneapolis, Minn., 1968.

5. Project description in material distributed at the National Conference on Paraprofessionals, Career Advancement and Pupil Learning, op. cit.

6. New Careers Newsletter, op. cit., Summer, 1968.

7. "Exemplary Education for Early Childhood", PACE, Weld County School District, Greeley, Colorado (July, 1968).

8. Project description in material distributed at the National Conference on Paraprofessionals, Career Advancement, and Pupil Learning, op. cit.

9. At the new experimental branch of the State University of New York, the college at Old Westbury, one of the planned innovative programs is an entire college curriculum based upon a learning by teaching design.

10. Cited in "Where 'Failures' Make the Grade: Two Schools for Dropouts", Carnegie Quarterly, XVI, No. 4 (Fall, 1968).

11. In addition to the studies already cited, see additional reports contained in the materials distributed at the National Conference..., op. cit. See also, Teacher Aides: Handbook for Instructors and Administrators, University Extension, University of Wisconsin, Madison, 1968.

12. See an Annotated Bibliography, op. cit., also, New Partners in the American School: Study of Auxiliary Personnel in Education, Bank Street College of Education, 1967; also, Bowman and Klopf, New Careers and Roles in the American Schools, Bank Street College, 1969; Gertrude Noar, Teacher Aides at Work, National Commission on Teacher Education and Professional Standards, NEA, 1967; also, materials distributed at the National Conference..., op. cit.

13. "The Annual Education Review", New York Times, January 9, 1969, identified the pressure for such control as the number one issue of urban education.

14. See Terry Borton "Reach, Touch and Teach", Saturday Review, January 18, 1969, who makes a strong case for affective education, an area where a person of the community could play a key part.

15. See Dwight Allen, "A Differentiated Staff: Putting Teacher Talent to Work", The Teacher and His Staff, Occasional Papers No. 1, National Commission on Teacher Education and Professional Standards, NEA. See also the description of the three-level classroom staff in Macon County, Alabama, described in the material distributed at the National Conference..., op. cit. A danger to be recognized is that a hierarchy of staff in the school does not necessarily mean either that the work of the school will be re-examined (for the same old tasks may simply be apportioned out among more people) nor that there will be a career progression for persons to move from one level to another, both essential factors, we believe, in the reform of the school system. A recent article, "Staff Differentiation", CTA Journal, January, 1969, gives some recognition to career advancement issues but not to the connection with the community.

16. Contained in materials distributed at the Nation Conference..., op. cit.

17. It is interesting and somewhat contrary to the general impression on such matters to find that in California, in the local school districts where teacher aides are being used, over 60% used some local school funds, about half some state money, nearly 70% had federal funds, and about 10% other sources such as foundations, PTAs, service clubs, etc. "Salaries Paid Teacher Aides in California School Districts, 1967-68", Research Bulletin 227 (October, 1968), California Teachers Association.

18. A 1967 amendment to ESEA, Title I, does require, however, the training of both the teacher and the aide, at least some portion of which is to be joint training.

19. At the National Conference..., op. cit.

20. See, for example, "Guidelines for Career Development of Auxiliary Personnel in Education", State Department of Education, New York (June, 1968); "The Use of Teacher Aides in Colorado", Colorado Department of Education (September, 1968); "Para-Professional Personnel, A Position Statement", Department of Education, State of Minnesota (June, 1968).